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ABSTRACT

Civics education in a democracy is a central goal of the public schools. The purpose of civics education is to educate youth to enable them to participate in a democracy. This guide highlights the components of a K-12 civics curriculum which features knowledge, democratic ideals, skills, and social participation. Sample lessons, state goals and objectives, a list of resources and programs, and a 20-item bibliography is included. (NL)

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# EDUCATING FOR AN EFFECTIVE CITIZENRY:

## Civics Curriculum Guide

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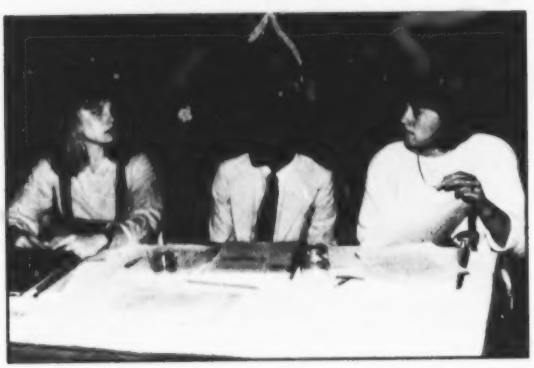

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*Division of General Academic Education*
**New Jersey State Department of Education**



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# EDUCATING FOR AN EFFECTIVE CITIZENRY:

## Civics Curriculum Guide

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June, 1990

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## FOREWORD

The goal of public education is to prepare students to function politically, economically, and socially as adults. We achieve that goal when we help students to develop the skills, knowledge, and democratic ideals that enable them to participate in and contribute meaningfully to the community. Citizenship participation is essential to the vitality and effectiveness of a democratic society. Schools can play a large role in this process by fostering civics participation and commitment schoolwide.

I think it is imperative that school districts integrate opportunities for effective citizenship education throughout the curriculum and take action to ensure that a positive civics climate prevails.

Saul Cooperman
Commissioner

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## THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRACY

"Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves therefore are its only safe depositories. And to render them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree."

--Thomas Jefferson, 1786

"The great moral attribute of self-government cannot be born and matured in a day; and if school children are not trained to it, we only prepare ourselves for disappointment, if we expect it from grown men."

--Horace Mann, 1845

"[Democracy] must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder."

--John Dewey, 1916

## INTRODUCTION

Civics education is a perennial educational concern since 1) education for citizenship in a democracy has historically been the central goal of our public schools, and 2) the struggle for genuine forms of democratic community is never complete.

In addition to the timeless importance of civics education, the special circumstances of a given era compound the ongoing political imperative of advancing democratic citizenship. During the last decade, several social and political developments together have heightened the imperative for civics education. These include: 1) continued low levels of voter turnout, the near-lowest in 1988 elections and the lowest among democracies (Savage, 1989); 2) an apparent prevalence of anti-democractic attitudes among our youth, as reported in several studies (Elam, 1984; Tanner, 1985); 3) a fresh rash of prejudice and intolerance manifested in numerous violent acts across the country (Pate, 1988; Molnar, 1989); and 4) the proliferation in both the economy and politics of calculated efforts to deceive and manipulate public opinion, which amounts to a subversion of the very values upon which our democratic republic was founded.

As citizens in Eastern Europe clamor for participatory democracy, too many United States citizens remain uninformed, passive, and even disenfranchised, feeling that they are unable to influence or contribute significantly to the shaping of goals and policies in our country. The cumulative effect of these events and issues is such that we no longer can afford to neglect the role of civic responsibility in our society and civics education in our school. Ernest Boyer in High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America (1983) warns that:

> Civic illiteracy is spreading and unless we find better ways to educate ourselves as citizens, we run the risk of drifting unwittingly into a new kind of Dark Age - a time when, increasingly, specialists will control knowledge and the decision-making process. (p. 105)

### The Purpose of Civics Education

While neither civics education nor the public schools alone can ensure an active, committed citizenry, neither can they ignore their role in promoting one. The central purpose of the public schools historically has been to educate youth to enable them to participate in our democracy. "The goal is to give students an integrated [interdisciplinary] core of knowledge that they can apply to problems they encounter as citizens" (Boyer, 1989, p. 7). Civics, or citizenship education, is the teaching and learning of the knowledge, skills, ideals, and active participation that are vital to democracy. Educators in New Jersey must renew their commitment to advancing civics education and civic-mindedness among our youth.

## Historical Perspective

This commitment to education for democratic citizenship has been reaffirmed by a long line of American leaders and educators. Our nation's founders, including George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, insisted that the survival and growth of democracy depended on the actions of an educated citizenry and envisioned schools performing this vital service for the nation. Horace Mann and John Dewey argued eloquently for the role of schools in preparing our students for independently minded and socially responsible citizens.

This concept of educating students for citizenship persisted as the overall goal of public education until the mid-20th century when civics education became identified with the social studies and was treated as a special course of study rather than an overarching goal of public schooling.

Since that time, dominant reform movements have given civics education low priority in the school curriculum. The post-Sputnik era was characterized by discipline-centered reforms that focused on the academic at the expense of societal and civic concerns. The "relevancy" movement focused on personal issues, similarly neglecting civics education. During the mid-1970s, the back-to-basics movement again obfuscated the civic mission of the schools; and in the 1980s, attention was given to academic "excellence" and international competiveness.

Meanwhile, the social and political developments of the last decade have demanded that educators of the 1990s "rediscover" civics as the central purpose of public schooling in the United States. The New Jersey Legislature and the Governor reaffirmed this civics commitment in 1988 by requiring that the New Jersey State Department of Education prepare curriculum guidelines for the teaching of civics (N.J.S.A. 18A:35-2.1) (see Appendix).

## From Academic Civics to Active Civics

In the past, civics education has been ignored or presented simply as the structure and functions of government; and students have been a captive, passive audience. Their passivity is manifested in the rote recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and perfunctory voting in school elections. School elections, all too often, are simply popularity contests, which do not provide for meaningful discussion of issues, nor lead to sustained involvement in school affairs. As Fred Newmann insists (in "Reflective Civic Participation", Social Education),

> Unless students are placed in settings and roles that require them to deliberate about the nature of public good and participate in the process of influence and negotiation to achieve it, they will fail to reap the personal benefits of citizenship, and the civic culture will languish. For this reason, we should try whenever possible to structure participatory roles within schools, community service, and social advocacy projects so that students confront the kinds of issues faced by public citzens. (p. 357)

Students need opportunities to participate in projects that address real topics and issues, ones in which they have a vested interest in the decision-making process and in the implementation of the decision. Newmann is arguing for "authentic rather than merely academic occasions," ones in which

> discussions are characterized by conflict among private interests, by competing notions of the public good, by uncertainty about the actual consequences of policies and actions, and by the necessity of resolving differences through argument, reason, and negotiations, rather than by coercion or appeal to arbitrary authority. (p. 357)

In a complementary vein, Benjamin Barber advocates real contexts for discussing issues and taking action, stating that students become effective citizens only when they engage in

> ...debate and deliberation on policy, formulating agenda, developing a faculty for making public judgments, participating in referenda, serving in local and regional civic and political offices, supporting and working for political parties and public interest groups, as well as voting. (p. 355)

To Barber, these tasks amount to "real participation and empowerment," opportunities in which students learn to identify, understand, critique, and actively strive to solve problems that are surfacing in our community, state, nation, and world. Students need these opportunities to develop not only the skills of critical analysis, but also the sense of responsibility to use them to benefit society. Thus, it is imperative that schools provide the forum in which students link fundamental knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes, and democratic ideals in such a way as to become impelled to actively engage in political, economic, and social life.

## Fostering Active Citizenship through the Schools

Schools must create a civic climate to foster civic responsibility. Walter Parker describes this civic climate as follows:

> More so than knowledge, civic virtue is a disposition to think and act on behalf of the public good. Insomuch as the school is itself a form of social life, it should be conducted so as to encourage that disposition rather than discourage it. (p. 354)

Schools can foster active citizenship by establishing a commitment to citizenship education as their central goal. This goal must be articulated in the educational philosophy of each school, embraced by all members of the school community, and evident in the behavior and interactions throughout. Civics, or citizenship education, is the shared responsibility of all members of the school community, and not simply an academic topic limited to the traditional social studies program.

This means that students should have opportunities for genuine input into decisions that affect them and that administrators and teachers must conduct their schools and classrooms democratically to provide the opportunity for students to participate in the decision-making process and to help shape the outcomes. Students rights and responsibilities must be emphasized in such areas as due process procedures so that a climate of justice is evident in the unwritten curriculum of the school. This will reinforce the written curriculum in which students learn about concepts of justice and fair play.

In making citizenship education their central goal, schools should not limit the teaching of citizenship to the social studies program. Instead, they must infuse it into all existing curricula, K-12. For example, an examination of the effects of ocean dumping and water pollution, while probably studied within the science curriculum, raises serious civic issues which must be addressed both by the science teacher and by others as part of an interdisciplinary effort. In order to make informed decisions about increasingly complex social, economic, scientific, and political problems, students need to synthesize knowledge from every subject area.

## Building A Civic Climate

To build support for civics education, school districts should involve a full spectrum of the school community from the beginning. Planning should begin with the creation of a committee that includes students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other community members.

A schoolwide civics climate should include the following components:

1. An appropriate curriculum that infuses citizenship skills throughout the curriculum, not only in the social studies.

2. A school that models appropriate democratic values and attitudes. The appropriate civics behaviors for the varying grade levels should be modeled by teachers and administrators.

3. Frequent opportunities for students to practice democratic actions in the school and community. These opportunities, real as well as simulated, must be meaningful and appropriate for the grade level of the students. Simulated activities might include mock trials, model United Nations programs, constitutional debates, and role playing. Real activities might include schoolwide student councils with decision-making power or school and community campaigns on important issues in which student actions and opinions are sought and accepted (see Resources, page 24, for a listing of organizations and programs).

In the civics curriculum, many controversial issues may be raised and discussed by students. It is important for schools to draw the distinction between teaching about an issue, teaching in favor of a particular point of view, and the student's civic responsibility in deciding on the merits of a particular issue.

### The Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of the guide is to assist school districts in developing, revising, or improving their civics curriculum. The guide includes recommended civics goals and objectives which should be infused throughout the curriculum, K-12. The intent of the guide is to encourage districts to infuse the teaching of civic skills into all curriculum areas, to create a civic climate, and to foster active and effective citizenship participation by students in school, community, state, national, and global affairs.

## COMPONENTS OF A K-12 CIVICS CURRICULUM

As previously noted, civics or citizenship education is concerned with teaching students the knowledge, democratic ideals, skills, and commitment to active participation. These components are discussed below.

### Knowledge

Knowledge provides the facts, concepts, ideas, and generalizations that help students understand human affairs and the human condition. It offers the basis for understanding our democratic ideals, and is the foundation for the development of skills as well as active participation within society. In our complex world, knowledge is necessary for citizens to make informed decisions. Students must learn to apply knowledge gained from ALL curricular areas to this decision-making process.

### Democratic Ideals

The fundamental ideals drawn from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, with the Bill of Rights, form the basic principles of our society. Citizens must be aware of, and be committed to, shared democratic values and beliefs; students need to discuss, understand, and reflect upon these ideals. These include individual freedom and equality under the law, due process and justice, and protection of minority rights. They also include generally accepted qualities such as honesty, fair play, responsibility, cooperation, and courage, which were identified as part of character and values education by the Advisory Council on Developing Character and Values in New Jersey Students. (See Report of the Advisory Council on Developing Character and Values in New Jersey Students, April, 1989).

The schools must not indoctrinate students to accept these ideals blindly. Rather, education should present the historic derivation of these ideals and the contemporary application as essential to understanding our society, its institutions, and its relationships with the global community. Not only should such ideals be discussed as they relate to ALL curricular areas and to current affairs; they should also be modeled by every educator and embodied in the daily operation of the school.

## Skills

Skills enable students to link knowledge with ideals and to become active participants in society. Skills are developed through consistent instruction and practice across the K-12 curriculum. Skills essential to citizen participation can be grouped in three major categories:

Skills related to acquiring information, e.g., observation, reading, writing, and study skills, reference and technical research skills.

Skills related to organizing and using information, e.g., cognitive, problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Skills related to interpersonal relationships and social participation, e.g., personal and group interaction skills.

## Social Participation

A civic participant uses the knowledge, ideals, and skills learned in the home, the school, and the community as tools for action. Connecting the classroom with the community provides many opportunities for students to participate in civic life. Ample opportunities should be afforded students to apply their civic competencies to real-life problems and issues, including those which may be controversial. In order to foster social participation, schools must develop in students the abilities to:

Keep informed about issues that affect society;

Identify situations in which social action is required;

Negotiate, compromise, debate, and persuade for the resolution of conflicts and differences; and

Work individually or with others to influence those in positions of power.

Effective civic education requires an additional element: a commitment to take part in public affairs. In a survey of elementary students, Boyer found that "...the principle cause of their (students') social isolation and tenuous sense of engagement is their lack of involvement. They are never asked to participate...to contribute to the management of the school itself" (1989). Creative and humane classrooms across the curriculum must provide the knowledge, the skills, and the ideals for a thoughtful consideration of issues; and they must stimulate the desire in students to be active participants in school and the rest of their society.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE CIVICS CURRICULUM GUIDE

The remainder of this booklet is arranged into three sections.

**1. Goals and Objectives of the Civics Curriculum:**

The components of this civics curriculum guide generally follow the National Council for the Social Studies curriculum model. The learning goals and objectives for the K-12 civics curriculum have been divided into the four categories introduced above: Knowledge, Democratic Ideals, Skills, and Social Participation. The objectives have been written in broad terms, allowing school districts the latitude to determine the content and level of difficulty for their students at the various grade levels.

For each objective, suggested grade levels **E** (elementary, K-6), **M** (middle, 6-8), and **S** (secondary, 9-12) are used to indicate when the objective should be introduced **(I)**, developed **(D)**, and refined **(R)**.

Introduction (I) means that students are introduced to and taught the learning objective. Development (D) means that students learn, in-depth or with more complex material, the objectives: they are expected to begin applying their knowledge to new situations. Refinement (R) means that students have grasped the essential quality of the objective and are continually reinforcing that understanding by applying the learning to new situations with greater depth of competence.

These designations are meant to serve as guidelines to enable school districts to determine developmentally where and when certain skills are best introduced, developed, and refined. In some instances, introduction and development (I/D) or development and refinement (D/R) might be within the same grade levels. In some instances a school district might determine that in light of their student population and/or curricula, the grade level determinations do not exactly fit their needs. The designations are flexible and should be rearranged to suit the needs of the students.

**2. Ideas for Incorporating Civics across the Curriculum - Sample Lessons:**

Following the presentation of the four goals and objectives, sample lessons are provided to illustrate ways in which specific civics objectives can be incorporated into content areas other than social studies. Wherever possible, problem solving should be emphasized in all content areas. These ideas are neither comprehensive, nor should they be viewed as the format for how to write a lesson plan. Rather, they simply demonstrate how to integrate a civics component into the content areas.

While these lessons illustrate the incorporation of civics ideals across the content areas, they stop short of identifying a culminating activity in which students have the opportunity to practice democratic participation in school and community affairs. The omission of a culminating activity is deliberate for the following reasons:

(1) Students should determine when action is an appropriate extension of the classroom experience; and

(2) Students should have some latitude in devising and implementing an appropriate plan of action based on the specific issue, their personal reactions, and their conclusions.

**At all times, the lesson should be developed to foster a civic climate within the school and a civic attitude within the student.**

3. **Civics Education Resources and Programs:**

This section is designed to provide the names and addresses of organizations that school districts can contact for materials to aid in developing an effective civics curriculum. This listing is not all inclusive.

## LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### KNOWLEDGE

**GOAL:**

Students will learn the facts, concepts, ideas, and generalizations necessary to become effective citizens in a democratic society.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of the knowledge component have been organized according to four overall themes.

**Nature of Government**

The student will:

| E | M | S | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | D | R | 1. | Explain why people normally live in groups that require rules for their existence. |
| I | D | R | 2. | Generate a definition of government. |
| I | D | R | 3. | Investigate the functions and characteristics of government. |
| I | D | R | 4. | Describe why and how governments were established throughout history. |
| | I | D/R | 5. | Compare and contrast the various forms and functions of governments. |
| | I | D/R | 6. | Analyze how governments have been influenced by historical antecedents. |
| I | D | R | 7. | Consider the global interrelatedness of governments/societies. |

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**KEY**

E = elementary level
M = middle level
S = secondary level

I = introduce objective
D = develop objective
R = refine objective

**Structure and Functions of our Political Institutions**

The student will:

| E | M | S | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | D/R | 1. | Investigate the origins and development of the ideals and principles of our political system. |
| I | D | R | 2. | Discuss the functions of our political institutions as defined in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, of the United States. |
| | I | D/R | 3. | Examine historic extensions and interpretations of our Constitutions, including those found in the Bill of Rights, major Supreme Court decisions, and the Federalist Papers. |
| | I | D/R | 4. | Explain the basic principles of our governmental system, including federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, popular sovereignty, individual rights, etc. |
| I | D | R | 5. | Describe the structure and operations of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of our federal government. |
| I | D | R | 6. | Recognize the existence of political parties, presidential cabinet, and judicial review as aspects of the "unwritten Constitution." |
| I | D | R | 7. | Investigate the organization and functions of state and local governments, as well as their relationships to each other and the federal government. |

**Political Processes: Federal, State, Local Levels**

The student will:

| E | M | S | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | D | R | 1. | Explain the process by which a bill becomes a law, including the system of checks and balances. |
| | I | D/R | 2. | Examine the impact of executive, legislative, and/or judicial actions in interpreting and changing laws. |
| | I | D/R | 3. | Analyze how decisions made by the various branches and levels of government may impact upon one another. |

| E | M | S | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | D/R | 4. | Describe the Constitutional limits on government decision-making powers. |
| | I | D/R | 5. | Recognize the influence of political decisions, including public opinion, political debate, dissent, and the actions of special interest groups upon the decision-making process. |
| I | D | R | 6. | Compare the processes for electing and removing officials at each level of government. |
| | I | D/R | 7. | Analyze the structure, role, and impact of political parties in American government. |
| I | D | R | 8. | Contrast the legal requirements for holding office with the personal characteristics that appear to influence voters. |
| | I | D/R | 9. | Identify methods of changing ineffective, discriminatory, unjust laws through initiative, referendum, and/or the amendment process. |

**Rights, Responsibilities, and the Law**

The student will:

| E | M | S | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | D | R | 1. | Determine the specific rights and liberties guaranteed by the United States Constitution, Bill of Rights, and New Jersey Constitution to all persons. |
| I | D | R | 2. | Identify the rights granted and responsibilities required by civil and criminal laws at the federal, state, and local levels. |
| I | D | R | 3. | Recognize the dynamic nature of rights, responsibilities, and the law, and that they are affected by socials economic, and political factors. |
| I | D | R | 4. | Assess the effectiveness of the justice system and due process in protecting individual rights. |
| I | D | R | 5. | Recognize the individual's responsibility to respect lawful authority, as well as the right to dissent in legitimate ways from unjust laws and arbitrary authority. |

## DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

**GOAL:**

Students will develop an appreciation of and a commitment to the fundamental ideals of our democratic society.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The student will:

| E | M | S | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | D | R | 1. | Demonstrate an understanding, appropriate to his/her age and grade level, of democratic ideals. |
| I | D | R | 2. | Apply democratic ideals to daily living. |
| I | D | R | 3. | Assess democratic ideals in relation to personal life, family, school, community, and society. |
| I | D | R | 4. | Evaluate the conflicts inherent among various democratic ideals (e,g., individual rights vs. the common good, freedom of the press vs. national security). |
| I | D | R | 5. | Demonstrate a commitment to fundamental democratic ideals. |

The democratic ideals cited above include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following (listed in order of priority):

**Democratic Principles**

Liberty
Equality
Justice
Human rights
Individualism
Social responsibility
Supremacy of law
Due process
Popular sovereignty
Majority rule/Minority rights
Government protects individual rights and works for the common good

**Rights**

Life
Liberty

Dignity
Security
Privacy
Equal opportunity
Justice
Voting
Dissent
Property
Education

**Freedoms**

Conscience
Thought
Expression
Speech
Press
Assembly
Religion
Inquiry
Participation in the political process

**Individual Responsibilities**:

Participation in the democratic process
Support of just laws/rules
Opposition to unjust rules, laws, and authority by lawful means
Respect for human life
Respect for the rights and property of others
Recognition of diverse opinions and ideas
Work for the common welfare
Personal and civic decisions based upon evidence and rational thought processes
Knowledge of and action based on your rights and responsibilities
Knowledge of structure/functions of government
Demonstration of honesty/fair play

## SKILLS

**GOAL:**

Students, in using their acquired knowledge, will develop and apply the skills essential to become effective citizens in a democratic society.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives for the skills component have been organized according to three overall themes

### Acquiring and Organizing Information

E M S

I D R 1. The student will refine reading, study, and communication skills to acquire and organize information.

I D R 2. The student will obtain information and opinions about past and current issues and problems by:

- 2.1 Reading printed materials (e.g., books, periodicals, newspapers, etc.).
- 2.2 Examining visual resources (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, pictures, cartoons, artifacts, etc.).
- 2.3 Using electronic resources (e.g., radio, T.V., audio/video media, computer and electronic data bases, etc.).
- 2.4 Drawing upon public and private sources, such as government agencies and community groups.
- 2.5 Participating in discussions with fellow citizens.

### Interpreting and Using Information

E M S

I D R 1. The student will evaluate the validity and quality of information and opinions by:

- 1.1 Determining the credibility of the source.
- 1.2 Distinguishing between fact and opinion.
- 1.3 Detecting bias.
- 1.4 Judging the relevance of evidence.
- 1.5 Assessing the logic of an argument.

I D R 2. The student will use the information to:

2.1 Clarify issues.
2.2 Test hypotheses.
2.3 Construct generalizations.
2.4 Draw conclusions.
2.5 Offer solutions to problems.
2.6 Predict possible outcomes.
2.7 Predict issues and problems.

I D R 3. The student will apply problem-solving techniques with respect to social, political, and civic issues by:

3.1 Identifying the problem.
3.2 Forming hypotheses.
3.3 Gathering, analyzing, and sythesizing data.
3.4 Testing hypotheses.
3.5 Formulating conclusions.
3.6 Applying the conclusions to new situations.

I D R 4. The student will apply effective decision-making techniques by:

4.1 Identifying and/or developing appropriate criteria for making judgments.
4.2 Determining the goals and/or values involved in the decision.
4.3 Developing alternatives.
4.4 Identifying and assessing the consequences of alternatives for self and others based on stated values.
4.5 Recognizing that others may apply different criteria to a problem and may arrive at other alternatives.
4.6 Selecting an alternative.

I D R 5. The student will apply and monitor cognitive skills by:

5.1 Selecting an appropriate strategy to solve a problem.
5.2 Self-monitoring one's thinking process.

**Personal and Cooperative Skills**

**Personal Skills**: The student will:

E M S

I D R 1. Develop a positive self-concept, build self-esteem, and move toward self-actualization.

| E | M | S | |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | D | R | 2. Consider the viewpoints of others. |
| I | D | R | 3. Express personal convictions, beliefs, and feelings. |
| I | D | R | 4. Develop behavior patterns which respect the customs and norms of society and the rights of individuals. |
| I | D | R | 5. Recognize the interrelatedness of human beings. |

**Cooperative Skills**: The student will:

| E | M | S | |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | D | R | 1. Contribute to the development of a supportive group climate. |
| I | D | R | 2. Participate in the development of goals and rules for the functioning of the group. |
| I | D | R | 3. Participate effectively in groups. |
| I | D | R | 4. Participate in delegating, organizing, planning, decision-making, and taking action in a group setting. |
| I | D | R | 5. Participate in persuading, compromising, debating, and negotiating to resolve conflict and differences in groups. |
| I | D | R | 6. Develop the human relation skills necessary to communicate and work with others. |

## SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

**GOAL:**

Students will apply the personal and group interaction skills necessary for active participation in a democratic society.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The student will:

| E | M | S | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I/D | D/R | R | 1. | Keep informed about issues that affect society. |
| I | D | R | 2. | Participate in student government elections, political simulations, or other organized activities. |
| I | D/R | R | 3. | Participate in school, local, state, and national governmental processes. |
| I/D | D/R | R | 4. | Identify situations in which social action is required. |
| I/D | D/R | R | 5. | Participate individually and/or in a group setting in making decisions and taking social action. |
| I | D | R | 6. | Select the appropriate institutional, legal, political, economic, and social means to effect change. |
| I | D | D/R | 7. | Strive for extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights. |
| I/D | D/R | R | 8. | Work to influence those in positions of power. |

## IDEAS FOR INCORPORTING CIVICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

### SAMPLE LESSONS

**CONTENT AREA:** Mathematics

**TOPIC:** Analysis of Statistics

**CIVICS OBJECTIVE:** The student will apply problem-solving techniques with respect to social, political, and civic issues.

**SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:**

1. Select one of the following issues:

   A. Federal Tax Proposals
   B. Local school or municipal budgets
   C. Voting patterns in latest national and/or local elections
   D. State/county income levels
   E. Housing needs and the homeless
   F. Long-term ramifications of pre-natal care
   G. Aging patterns
   H. Other

2. Have students collect data for analysis.

3. Given the data, students will identify trends and draw conclusions about the issue using mathematical techniques appropriate to their age and grade level.

4. The student will prepare an oral, written, or graphic presentation that could be used to support his/her position based upon conclusions from the data analysis.

**CONTENT AREA:** Science

**TOPIC:** Environmental Issue(s)

**CIVICS OBJECTIVE:** The student will identify situations in which social action is required.

**SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:**

1. Identify and select one of the following issues with which the students will work.

   Oil Spills
   Air Pollution
   Food toxins
   Star Wars
   Offshore dumping of waste
   Waste disposal
   Endangered species
   Chemical waste
   Nuclear energy
   Development of open spaces
   Other current issues of concern

2. Have the students research and analyze the selected issue, as well as its global implications, from a scientific viewpoint.

3. Given appropriate research and scientific analysis, each student will select and complete one of the following activities:

   A. Prepare and submit a formal research paper in which the issue is defined, the historical background is discussed, and the overall implications of the issue are considered.

   B. Develop and submit a comprehensive proposal in which the scientific problems inherent in the specific issue are addressed and resolved.

   C. Develop a laboratory or field experience through which aspects of the specific issue are investigated and reported.

   D. Construct and publish a thematic newspaper or newsletter regarding the issue.

   E. Role play an advisor to the President or an expert witness appearing before a congressional committee charged with investigating the cited issue.

   F. Act as a "scientific reporter" and contribute a series of articles about the cited issue to the student newspaper in the school.

**CONTENT AREA:** Music

**TOPIC:** Analysis of the lyrics of songs

**CIVICS OBJECTIVE:** Recognize the dynamic nature of rights, responsibilities, and the law and that they are affected by social, economic, and political factors.

**SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:**

1. Identify songs from a period of history or songs that deal with a social, economic, or political issue.
2. Have students develop an understanding of the relationship between a society's music and its values.
3. Listen to songs from a period of history and analyze the words as these relate to values, social issues, governmental reform, etc.
4. Identify the influence music has made on civic changes in a society.
5. Create musical presentations that depict social issues relating to a civic issue.

**CONTENT AREA:** Health Education

**TOPIC:** The Effects of Alcohol/Drugs on Individuals

**CIVICS OBJECTIVES:** The student will identify circumstances when action is required and the course of action to be taken. The student will keep informed about issues affecting society.

**SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:**

1. Discuss the effects of alcohol/drugs on an individual in relation to a person's size, body weight, body chemistry, amount of time for consumption, etc.

2. Students should determine the reasons why people drink and strategies for responding to peer pressure.

3. Students should learn to make decisions and act on those decisions. Students, in following the steps of the decision-making process, would:

   - determine the problem;
   - gather information;
   - analyze the data;
   - examine the possible alternatives, exploring the consequences of each decision and determining peer pressure, if any;
   - make the decision; and
   - act, based on the decision.

4. Students could act on their decisions by:

   - writing letters voicing their opinions.
   - by refusing to ride with students who drink.
   - by calling for help for people who are drunk.
   - taking actions to prevent a person from getting drunk.
   - forming groups to counter peer pressure.

**CONTENT AREA:** Classroom Procedures

**TOPIC:** Developing Classroom Rules and Procedures -- Creating a Classroom Constitution

**CIVICS OBJECTIVES:**

1. (Knowledge) The student will explain why people living in groups normally require rules for their existence.
2. (Democratic Ideals) The student will demonstrate an understanding, appropriate to his/her grade level, of democratic ideas.
3. (Personal and Cooperative Skills) The student will participate in the development of goals and rules for the functioning of the group.

**SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:**

1. Ask students why people need rules (in families, on playgrounds, on buses, in schools, etc.). Record, review, and consolidate responses. Save the list on a chart that can serve as basis for a preamble for the class constitution.
2. Post the following "Tests for Good Rules": a) easy to follow; b) simply stated; c) includes only those activities able to be performed; d) enforceable; e) not going against another rule; and f) includes penalty or consequence for breaking it. Brainstorm with students examples of rules that would or would not meet these guidelines.
3. Develop with students a list of "Rules We Need" for the class. With young children, talk over the rules together and write them on a chart. Have children check to see if each rule they have identified passes the tests for good rules. Decide whether the rules that don't pass should be rewritten or eliminated.
4. Make a final chart of rules (with pictures) and post them prominently in class.
5. Ask students, "Who made these rules?" (They should recognize that they all did.) Have them reflect on how hard they worked (in small groups or as a whole class). Discuss any disagreement that arose and how they were resolved. Have students see that each member has the right to have his/her views respected.
6. Introduce the concept of a "constitution" -- a set of rules by which people agree to live. A constitution contains the most important rules for the group. Check the list over. If it is a particularly long list, help the students pare it down by dropping less important rules or those that can be subsumed under others.

7. Note that since the rules will form the basis of their constitution, it is important that a majority of the group accepts each rule. (Very young children may need to be introduced to the concept of majority rule and voting). Have the students vote on each rule individually, noting which ones are accepted as part of the constitution.

8. Introduce the term "preamble" -- an introduction to a constitution stating the reasons for and the intent of the law. Review with children to incorporate these into a preamble (e.g., "We the members of First Grade, in order to have a happy, peaceful classroom, to learn well, to be fair and polite to each other, to respect property, to be safe from accidents, ... do make these rules for us to follow.")

9. Make a final copy of the constitution. Have a signing ceremony during which everyone, including the teacher, agrees by their signature to live by it.

10. Display the document. Make copies for students and their parents.

11. Use this experience to encourage a discussion of the process and ideas involved, including follow-up in the home setting, and to draw parallels with the U.S. Constitution.

## CIVICS EDUCATION RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

American Association of School Administrators
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209-9988

American Bar Association
Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship
750 North Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith
8230 U.N. Plaza
New York, New York 07052

Association for Supervision and
Curriculum Development
225 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Center for Civic Education
5146 Douglas Fir Road
Calabasas, California 91302

Close Up Foundation
1235 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, Virginia 22202

The Commission on the Bicentennial of the
United States Constitution
808 17 Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Constitutional Rights Foundation
601 South Kingsley Drive
Los Angles, California 90005

Council for the Advancement of Citizenship
1724 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20016

Council of Chief State School Officers
379 Hall of the States
400 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Educators for Social Responsibility
23 Garden Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

ERIC/CHESS
2805 E. Tenth Street
Bloomfield, Indiana 47405

Institute for Democracy in Education
College of Education
1271 McCracken Hall
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701-2979

Institute for Political and Legal Education
c/o Educational Information and
Resource Center
700 Hollydell Court
Sewell, New Jersey 08080

National Association for Core Curriculum
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Kent State University - Main Campus
Kent, Ohio 44242

National Council for the Social Studies
3501 Newark Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20019

National Institute for Citizen Education
in the Law
25 E. Street, N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20001

National STS Network
117 Willard Building
University Park, Pennsylvania 16802

New Jersey Center for Law-Related Education
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903

New Jersey Close Up
c/o David Weiss
Lacey Township High School
Box 206
Lanoka Harbor, New Jersey 08734

New Jersey Council for the Social Studies
P.O. Box 4155
River Edge, New Jersey 07661

New Jersey State Bar Foundation
New Jersey Law Center
One Constitution Square
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901-1500

Phi Alpha Delta
Public Service Center
7315 Wisconsin Avenue
Suite 325E
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Social Science Education Consortium
855 Broadway
Boulder, Colorado 80302

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# APPENDIX

**SUBCHAPTER 2: STATE EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND STANDARDS**

**6:8-2.1 State educational goals**

(a) The State educational goals shall be the following outcome and process goals and shall be applicable to all public school districts and schools in the State.

(b) The public schools in New Jersey shall help every pupil in the State:

1. To acquire basic skills in obtaining information, solving problems, thinking critically and communicating effectively;

2. To acquire a stock of basic information concerning the principles of the physical, biological and social sciences, the historical record of human achievement and failures, and current social issues;

3. To become an effective and responsible contributor to decision-making processes of the political and other institutions of the community, State, country and world;

4. To acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding that permit him or her to play a satisfying and responsible role as both producer and consumer;

5. To acquire job entry level skills and also to acquire knowledge necessary for further education;

6. To acquire the understanding of and the ability to form responsible relations with a wide range of other people including, but not limited to, those with social and cultural characteristics different from his or her own;

7. To acquire the capacities for playing satisfying and responsible roles in family life;

8. To acquire the knowledge, habits and attitudes that promote personal and public health, both physical and mental;

9. To acquire the ability and the desire to express himself or herself creatively in one or more of the arts and to appreciate the aesthetic expressions of other people.

10. To acquire an understanding of ethical principles and values and the ability to apply them to his or her own life;

11. To develop an understanding of his or her own worth, abilities, potentialities and limitations;

12. To learn to enjoy the process of learning and to acquire the skills necessary for a lifetime of continuous learning and adaptation to change.

(c) The public schools in New Jersey shall provide:

1. Instruction which bears a meaningful relationship to the present and future needs and/or interests of pupils;

2. Significant opportunities, consistent with the age of the pupil, for helping to determine the nature of the educational experiences of the pupil;

3. Specialized and individualized kinds of educational experiences to meet the needs of each pupil;

4. Opportunities for teaching staff members and pupils to make recommendations concerning the operation of the schools;

5. Comprehensive guidance facilities and services for each pupil;

6. An environment in which any competition among pupils is positive;

## CONDUCT OF SCHOOLS

### ARTICLE I. CURRICULUM

**18A:35-1. Course in history of the United States in high school**

The superintendent of schools in each school district shall prepare and recommend to the board of education of the district, and the board of education shall adopt a suitable two-year course of study in the history of the United States, including the history of New Jersey, to be given to each student during the last four years of high school. Said course of study shall include materials recommended by the commissioner dealing with the history of the Negro in America.

**18A:35-2 Nature and purpose of United States history course**

Such course of study shall include instruction in

(1) The principles and ideals of the American form of representative government as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States and particularly in the Bill of Rights; and

(2) The history of the origin and growth of the social, economic and cultural development of the United States, of American family life and of the high standard of living and other privileges enjoyed by the citizens of the United States; and

(3) Such other events in the history of the United States as will tend to instill, into every girl and boy, a determination to preserve these principles and ideals as those of citizens of the United States and an appreciation of their solemn duty and obligation to exercise the privilege of the ballot, upon their reaching voting age, to the end that said priniples and ideals may be so preserved; and

(4) The history of the United States.

**18A:35-2.1. Curriculum guidelines for teaching of civics**

The State Department of Education shall prepare curriculum guidelines for the teaching of civics which may be used by local school boards in fulfilling the requirements established pursuant to N.J.S. 18A:35-1 and N.J.S. 18A:35-2.

**18A:35-3. Course in civics, geography and history of New Jersey**

Each board of education shall adopt a course of study in community civics, the geography, history and civics of New Jersey, and the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship as they relate to community and national welfare, which course shall be taken by all pupils in the public elementary schools in the grade or grades in which it is given, with the object of producing the highest type of patriotic citizenship.

### ARTICLE II. GOALS, STANDARDS & GUIDELINES; PROCEDURES OF EVALUATION; ENFORCEMENT

**18A:7A-4. Goal of free public schools**

The goal of a thorough and efficient system of free public schools shall be to provide all children in New Jersey, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location, the educational opportunity which will prepare them to function politically, economically and socially in a democratic society.